

## CLAIMS

1           1. A method for protecting files distributed over a network, comprising the  
2 steps of:  
3           displaying a list of files;  
4           generating protection status information in response to selection by a user of at  
5           least one of the files in the list of files; and  
6           sending the protection status information to a server computer.

1           2. The method of claim 1 wherein said displaying step displays a list of files  
2 together with a corresponding protection status for each file in the list of files, and  
3 wherein the method further comprises the step of modifying protection status of at least  
4 one of the files, and wherein said sending step sends modified protection status  
5 information to a server computer.

1           3. The method of claim 1 further comprising recording the protection status  
2 information in a protection status database.

1           4. A system for protecting files distributed over a network, comprising:  
2 a user interface displaying a list of files;  
3 a protection status manager generating protection status information in response  
4 to selection by a user of at least one of the files in the list of files; and  
5 a transmitter sending the protection status information to a server computer.

1           5. The system of claim 4 wherein said user interface displays a list of files  
2 together with a corresponding protection status for each file in the list of files, and  
3 wherein the protection status manager modifies protection status of at least one of the

4 files, and wherein said transmitter sends modified protection status information to a  
5 server computer.

1 6. The system of claim 4 further comprising a database manager recording the  
2 protection status information in a protection status database.